



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

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March 18, 2020

Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight
101 State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on the RIBridges system, which covers the reporting period February 16, 2020 – March 15, 2020. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/DHS Call Center summaries;
- CCAP off-cycle payments;
- LTSS interim payments and;
- Correspondence with federal partners (if any)

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve, your interest in the health of the RIBridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHAWKINS", written in a cursive style.

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



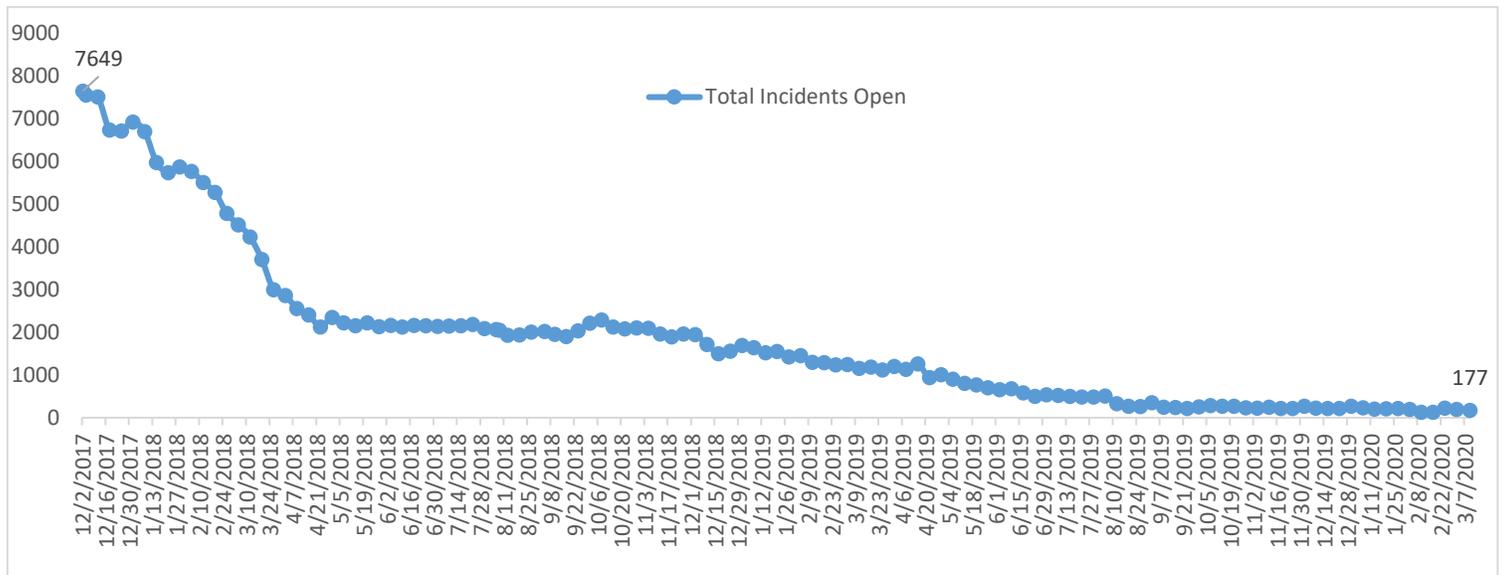
RI Bridges: Monthly Update

March 2020

Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life, and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of work on RIBridges is an important part of the equation. With significant improvements to system stabilization under our belt, we are looking ahead to refocus our efforts on ensuring full compliance of the system. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

Due to a focused effort on consistent and stable system operations, the number of new and existing incidents (when the system does not operate as expected for a DHS client, worker or provider) has decreased by 7,472 incidents. As of March 10, 2020, open incidents totaled 177 – a 98 percent drop since December 2017.



DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

Hiring Update

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since February 2020, DHS hired fourteen employees. Their positions are:

- 1 Customer Support Specialist dedicated to the Call Center
- 8 Eligibility Technicians
- 1 Programming Services Officer dedicated to the Office of Child Care
- 1 Principal Clerk
- 2 Human Services Business Officers dedicated to the Financial Management Unit
- 1 Social Caseworker

Training Overview

Overview

Training Topic	Training Date	# of Training Hours	# of New Staff	# of Current Staff
New Hire Orientation	3/2/2020 and 3/3/2020	12	12	0
Claims, Collection, Recovery Unit Training	2/20/2020 and 2/27/2020 (2 half day sessions) 3/5/2020 (2 half day sessions)	18	0	74
Long Term Services Supports Training – Worker In Box Training	3/12/2020 3/13/2020	12	0	62
Medical Training	3/9/2020 thru 3/11/2020	18	0	24
STAR Supervisor Training	3/3/2020	6	0	12
Totals		66	12	172*

**current number of staff trained is a duplicate number*

New Hire Orientation

This period we held one New Hire Orientation with a total of 12 participants.

Current Staff Overview

During the last reporting period, the Center for Staff Development and Learning (CSDL) offered training to existing staff members in the areas of Medical, changes to functionality in RIBridges, Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit (CCRU) and supervisor training.

Workshop Descriptions

New Hire Orientation: The New Employee Orientation (NEO) Program is the first step in welcoming new hires to DHS. Its main objective is to familiarize new employees with the organization, its organizational structure, and its policies and procedures.

LTSS Worker Inbox Training: The purpose is for Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) staff members to understand the new functionality being introduced in the March release with a focus on the updates to the worker inbox changes.

Claims, Collection and Recovery Unit (CCRU) Training: The goal of this training is to increase DHS staff capacity on general and complex operational procedures for the referral of an overpayment within RIBridges. The learning objectives:

- Increase job knowledge regarding CCRU processes
- Increase ability to utilize RIBridges system to make a referral to the CCRU
- Understand what constitutes an overpayment

STAR Supervisor Training: This training was designed by supervisors for supervisors. The goals of the trainings are as follows:

- Instill the DHS Guiding Principles in everyday work
- Support supervisors by enhancing leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills
- Build professional capacity through the DHS workforce
- Create tools that encourage and support a culture of continuous improvement
- Identify behavioral styles
- Incorporate the DHS guiding principles in everyday work and decision making
- Reset from past experiences and look to the future of DHS
- Understand what constitutes good supervision

Medical Training: Participants are trained to use the IES system for evaluating general and financial eligibility. DHS workers are taught to understand how our state provides health insurance for those meeting MAGI eligibility.

- Participants will understand the policy, procedures and system requirements for the program.
- Participants will understand how our state Medicaid Program collaborates with the Federal Government to provide medical assistance to children and their families, pregnant women, as well as Rhode Islanders between the ages of 19 and 64 years old, who are not disabled.
- Participants will learn about the application process including the required documentation, understanding the impact of income related to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and how to determine household size.

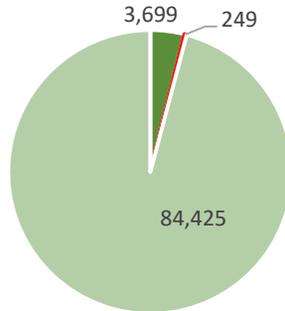
PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. As of March 11, 2020, the number of pending new applications across all programs is 4,453. The total of overdue pending applications awaiting state action is 1,933.

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
SNAP Exp	4	18	22	4	7	11	33
SNAP Non	298	182	480	69	22	91	571
CCAP	8	60	68	2	8	10	78
GPA Burial	0	1	1	1	3	4	5
SSP	0	22	22	0	3	3	25
GPA	37	52	89	50	27	77	166
RIW	83	74	157	15	52	67	224
Undetermined Medical	42	256	298	65	769	834	1,132
MAGI	42	27	69	59	61	120	189
MPP	6	41	47	0	5	5	52
Complex Medicaid	22	24	46	25	108	133	179
LTSS	30	877	907	24	868	892	1,799
Totals	572	1,634	2,206	314	1,933	2,247	4,453

SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. The timeliness for SNAP applications was 96.5 percent for expedited and 96.9 percent for non-expedited for February 2020. SNAP timeliness was 56 percent in November 2017. We have achieved more than 90 percent timeliness since April 2018.

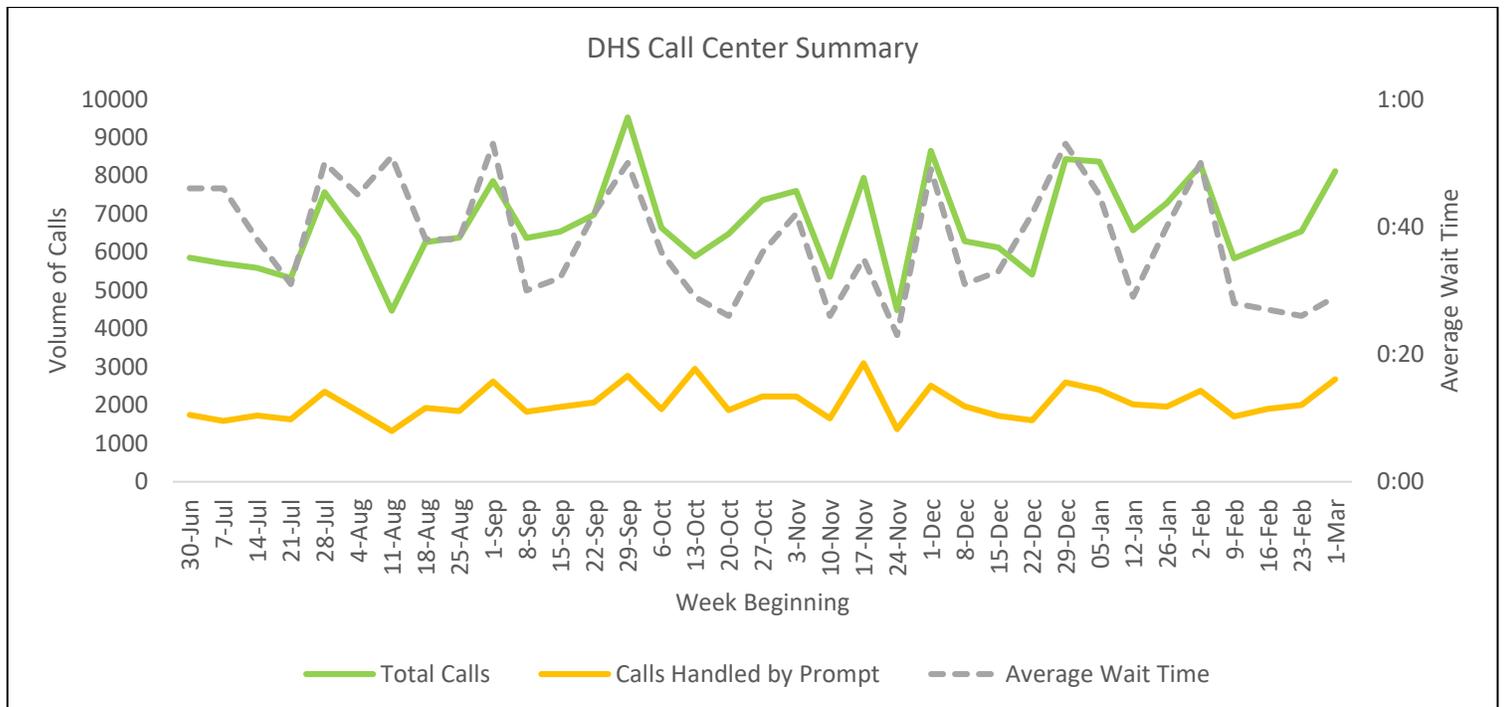


In February 2020, SNAP benefits were issued timely to more than 84,400 households. The number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of our SNAP population receiving benefits.

Untimely February Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population

CALL CENTER

With 8,117 calls during the first week of March 2020, the average wait time was just shy of 29 minutes. The six-week average is 31 minutes, 57 seconds.



CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers between February 20 – March 12, 2020.

Batch	Date Issued	# of Providers	Amount after Union/PAC removed
18	02/11/2020	654	\$2,892,705
18A	02/13/2020	27	\$51,439
18B	02/20/2020	28	\$77,486
19	02/25/2020	660	\$2,705,417
19A	02/27/2020	16	\$36,814
19B	03/04/2020	11	\$21,298
20	03/10/2020	663	\$2,758,485
20A	03/12/2020	71	\$60,239

*Batch 18 and 18A were included in last month's report. Batch 18B was not available until 02/20/2020. The whole batch is included in this month's report.

*Batch 20B will not be available until post-report deadline. It will be included in next month's report.

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (18, 18A, 18B)	709	\$3,021,631
Off-cycle (18A & 18B)	55	\$128,925
Provider off-cycle/total	7.76%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	4.27%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (19, 19A, 19B)	687	\$2,763,529
Off-cycle (19A & 19B)	27	\$58,112
Providers off-cycle/total	3.93%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.10%	-

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (20 & 20A)	734	\$2,818,723
Off-cycle (20A)	71	\$60,239
Provider off-cycle/total	9.67%	-
Payments off-cycle/total	2.14%	-

LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 868 overdue LTSS applications pending state action.

Through the contingency process, which ensures nursing and assisted living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, Rhode Island has paid out approximately 8.5 million dollars in interim payments to facilities for the state fiscal year 2020 so far (please refer to attached Medicaid Expenditures Report). We are in the process of identifying specific payments from various facilities to submit a schedule illustrating the dollar amount by facility.

Our payment reconciliation process remains ongoing as we continue to meet with long term care facilities across the state. In total, the state has paid approximately \$145 million we have collected about \$81 million in reconciliation payments so far from nursing home facilities. This represents approximately 55% of the total amount of contingency payments made.

UPDATE ON RECERTIFICATIONS PROCESS

The State has verified that Medicaid renewals were appropriately initiated by the RI Bridges System in compliance with the CMS approved renewal plan.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are important partners to the State. We continue to meet regularly to review progress on RIBridges. There were no UHIP-related correspondences with the federal government during this reporting period of February 16, 2020 through March 15, 2020.